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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3734  
INFO RHMFIUU/CDR USSOCOM MACDILL AFB FL//SCJ2//  
RULGPIA/USCOMSOLANT

UNCLAS BUENOS AIRES 000535

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STATE FOR INR/R/MR, I/GWHA, WHA, WHA/PDA, WHA/BSC,  
WHA/EPSC  
CDR USSOCOM FOR J-2 IAD/LAMA

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E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [KPAO](#) [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [PREL](#) [MEDIA](#) [REACTION](#)  
SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION IRAN MIDDLE EAST US-BOLIVIA  
ARGENTINE VOTE AT THE UN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE  
03/08/06

#### 1. SUMMARY STATEMENT

Today's major international stories include US President Bush's speech on the International Women's Day; US Vice President Dick Cheney's threats to Iran if it does not suspend its enriched uranium-related activities; the US and Russia rejecting Iran's proposal to enrich uranium in small amounts in its territory; Israel threatening Hamas leaders; Bolivian President Evo Morales not returning armament to the USG in response to the suspension of its military aid package for Bolivia; the aftermath of the press conference with US Under Secretary for Food, Nutrition and Consumer Service Eric M. Bost; and Argentina reportedly not condemning Cuba at the UN Human Rights Committee.

#### 2. OPINION PIECES AND KEY STORIES

- "Cheney threatens Iran with 'serious consequences'"

Leading "Clarín" reports (03/08) "US VP Dick Cheney threatened Iran with 'serious consequences' if it does not suspend its enriched uranium-related activities.

"During a speech at the Israel-American Public Affairs Committee, Cheney said that Tehran should know that 'if it maintains its current line, the international community is ready to impose serious sanctions.' 'We will not let Iran have any nuclear weapons.'

"Cheney's statements were made after Russia and the US approached their positions during a meeting in Washington between Russian FM Sergei Lavrov and his US counterpart, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice."

- Washington toughens its stance on Iran"

Conservative "La Prensa" reports (03/08) "Yesterday, the USG warned Iran - that it believes that any kind of enriched uranium-related activity in Iran is absolutely unacceptable, while VP Dick Cheney assured that the USG will not let the Iranian regime access nuclear weapons.

"After having met with Russian FM Sergei Lavrov, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice toughened her

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rhetic vis--vis Iran, although she did not mention that the UN could impose sanctions on Iran."

- "US and Russia reject an Iranian proposal"

Daily-of-record "La Nacion" (03/08) reports "While the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is analyzing in detail the Iranian nuclear program, Moscow and Washington rejected yesterday a Tehran proposal to enrich uranium in small amounts on its territory.

"... The Iranian decision has been interpreted differently by various diplomats gathered in Vienna - according to some, it is an attempt to prevent the UN Security Council from starting consultations about Iran's controversial nuclear program, while others consider it 'a tactical maneuver' to be able to denounce the West as inflexible if it does not accept the Iranian proposal."

- "Israel threatens Hamas leaders"

Daily-of-record "La Nacion" reports (03/08) "In an escalation of threats, Israel warned yesterday that it could kill Palestinian PM-elect Ismail Haniyeh if Hamas broke the truce with Israel by attacking the Jewish State. The terrorist group responded by threatening to kidnap Israelis to demand the release of Palestinian prisoners in exchange.

"... Hamas responded that Israeli Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz' threats are 'formal and clear terrorism.'

"... These mutual threats add themselves to the increasing signs of a crisis in the Palestinian fragile government unleashed by the disagreement between Hamas and Al-Fatah."

- "Evo refuses to return weapons to the US"

Conservative "La Prensa" reports (03/08) "In another episode of the tense US-Bolivian bilateral relationship, Bolivian President Evo Morales ordered not to dismantle the Joint Counterterrorist Force or return any armament to the US Pentagon. Washington decided to suspend its military aid for the unit in retaliation because La Paz had refused to appoint a commander promoted by the Bush administration.

"Morales told the White House 'We reject this blackmailing'...

"In an attempt to downplay the tone of the disagreement, the US Embassy released a communique pointing out that 'the cut in our aid (to Bolivia) should not affect the broad range of constructive ties between our two countries.'"

- "Argentina is reported not to condemn Cuba"

Jorge Elias, political columnist of daily-of-record "La Nacion," writes (03/08) "Less than one week away from the opening of the UN Human Rights Committee sessions in Geneva, an Argentine Foreign Ministry source told 'La Nacion' that 'nothing indicates' that Argentina will 'change its position on Cuba,' although 'we still do not know the content of the resolution.'

"In the event President Kirchner wanted to maintain the trend started by Eduardo Duhalde in 2003, his vote would be an abstention one, as happened in 2004 and 2005...

"On this occasion, Foreign Minister Jorge Taiana, former executive secretary to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights will be for the first time in charge of executing and justifying the presidential decision."

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